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### **PURPOSE**

To establish procedures regarding the investigation and evaluation of raw sewage discharges into customer residences/business and the follow-up investigation/evaluation for the purpose of consideration for courtesy reimbursements.

### **RESPONSIBILITY**

The following have responsibility within this Policy and Procedure:

~~Emergency Services Dispatcher~~ ~~Program Manager, Technical Support Services~~  
Emergency Services Personnel Sewer Line Maintenance Division  
Manager, Emergency Services

## **POLICY**

Any sewer system, no matter how well-designed and maintained may sometimes backup. When this unfortunate event does occur, the Department of Public Works will respond quickly and in a way that demonstrates sensitivity to our customers. This policy delineates response procedures.

## **PROCEDURE**

### **I. EMERGENCY SERVICES**

When the Public Services Dispatcher is advised of a sewage stoppage concern they shall write all the appropriate information in the Public Services Daily Log Book and notify Emergency Services Personnel for response.

Once notified by the Public Services Dispatcher that a stoppage has occurred, Emergency Services Personnel will immediately respond to the location and identify themselves to the customer. The Emergency Services Personnel will evaluate the stoppage and resolve the problem or refer stoppages that they cannot handle to the Sewer Line Maintenance Division for further action.

### **II. SEWER LINE MAINTENANCE**

The Sewer Line Maintenance Division will respond immediately to those stoppages causing a discharge into a customer's establishment or dwelling to resolve the problem. If it is determined that the stoppage is caused by a mainline sewage stoppage, the Sewer Line Maintenance Division will dispatch a Clean-Up Crew. On arrival at the customer's residence, the employee in charge of the Clean-Up Crew should immediately identify himself to the homeowner. The Clean-Up Crew will make every reasonable effort to clean the affected area, but will not move any type of furniture or residential items.

### **III. COMMUNICATIONS**

Any time a Clean-Up Crew responds to a residence or business, the Emergency Services Manager shall be notified. If damage resulted from County-owned lines, the employee in charge of the Clean-Up Crew will advise his supervisor, who will contact the Emergency Services Manager within one working day to assess the damage. At no point should any County employee discuss responsibility/liability for damages with the customer. All customer inquiries of this nature should be referred to the Emergency Services Manager.

### **IV. EMERGENCY SERVICES MANAGER**

~~The Emergency Services Manager will visit the customer within one working day and will~~  
investigate and evaluate all damages and provide a policy statement to the customer. (Please see Attachment 1.) If it is determined by the Emergency Services Manager that a mainline stoppage has caused the damage to the homeowner, he shall advise the resident to contact the Office of Risk Management if they wish to file a claim for damages incurred.

## V. DOCUMENTATION

1. Once the Public Services Dispatcher has recorded all the appropriate information in the Public Services Dispatch Daily Log Book and notified Emergency Services Personnel to respond, they are to generate a work order into the Cassworks Work Order System.
2. Once the Emergency Services Personnel has responded to the stoppage location and addressed the problem, they are to complete the work order generated by the Public Services Dispatch Unit and enter the appropriate follow-up information into the Cassworks Work Order System, closing out the original work order generated by the Dispatch Unit and creating a work order referral to the Sewer Line Maintenance Division if needed.
3. The Sewer Line Maintenance Division, upon completion of all field-related activity regarding the sewage stoppage, shall close the work order out referred from Emergency Services and generate any follow-up referrals as needed.
4. Once the Emergency Services Manager has completed his site visit and damage assessment, an Operation and Maintenance Report will be generated within three working days summarizing the incident, together with a summary list of damages/customer concerns. This report shall then be sent to the Office of Risk Management for evaluation and processing.

## VI. REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURE

1. Once the Operation and Maintenance Report generated by the Emergency Services Manager is sent to the Office of Risk Management, the customer will be advised to deal directly with the Office of Risk Management regarding the evaluation of the report and potential reimbursement for damages.
2. The customer will also be advised that in the event the Office of Risk Management denies their request for reimbursement, they may then submit a request to the Department of Public Works for evaluation for a courtesy reimbursement. Items that will be considered for reimbursement include the following.

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- a. Replacement of the actual expense of replacing or removing carpet, padding, and baseboards, not to exceed \$500.
    - b. Reimbursement of the actual expense of cleaning and sanitizing, or replacement, based on receipts presented by the homeowner, not to exceed \$500.
    - c. Reimbursement for both replacement and cleaning and sanitizing, based on receipts presented, not to exceed \$500.
    - d. Reimbursement will not be made for personal property damage
  3. Once the Department of Public Works has received a request for a courtesy payment, the request will be reviewed by the Bureau of Utility Operations Program Manager in Technical Support Services for consideration for reimbursement. The Program Manager will collect and review the following documents for evaluation purposes. A copy of the original report submitted to the Office of Risk Management, a copy of all receipts from the customer for which reimbursement is being requested, and a copy of the denial letter sent by the Office of Risk Management to the resident.
  4. If it is determined that reimbursement will be issued, the following actions will take place.
    - a. The resident is contacted to get the name, address, and social security number for generation of a direct payment.
    - b. A vendor ID request form is filled out with the property owner's information and is faxed to Accounts Payable
    - c. Accounts Payable will then fax back to the Program Manager a Vendor Identification Number.
    - d. A direct payment is then entered into PeopleSoft.
    - e. A courtesy letter will be generated for the homeowner from the Program Manager, Bureau of Utility Operations, Technical Support Services, advising them that reimbursement will be made according to the policy and they should receive payment within three to four weeks (see Attachment 2).

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
POLICY AND PROCEDURES  
MANUAL

**DPW F5-38**  
DIVISION: Bureau of Utility Operations  
SUBJECT: Emergency Clean-Up and  
Reimbursement to Customers for  
Cleanup in the Event of Sewage  
Backups

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- f. ~~The Program Manager, Technical Support Services, then forwards to~~  
Accounts Payable a documentation package consisting of the Operation  
and Maintenance Report (with receipts), the Office of Risk Management  
denial letter, and the courtesy letter.
- g. If it is determined that the request for courtesy payment will be denied,  
then the Program Manager will send a letter to the customer denying the  
request for the courtesy payment (Attachment 3).